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ing generation, who have not been pressed into the service. Indeed, Dr. Sprague's aim has been, whenever practicable, to have his materials furnished by men of established reputation, whose names would give an added interest to their subjects.

In the preceding volumes the more numerous denominations have been represented. The present volume is devoted to five of the smaller religious bodies which have obtained foothold among us by immigration, other than English, namely, the Lutheran, Reformed Dutch, Associate, Associate Reformed, and Reformed Presbyterian, — the last three names, so far as we can learn, designating distinctions rather than differences. A very large proportion of the subjects of this volume were natives of Germany, Holland, Scotland, or Ireland, came to this country as pioneers in the religious exploration of new settlements, and encountered the class of experiences which are more pleasant in the recollection than in the endurance. Though most of their names were new to us, we have found a peculiar charm in their lives; and some among them will have an enduring and favored place in the portrait-gallery of our memory. We have never read a biography in itself more noteworthy, or more attractive, than that of John Anderson, D. D., — a story that provokes alternate tears and laughter, presenting in the same man a curious commingling of the saint, the sage, and the simpleton, — one who was fit to commune with angels, and yet might have called out the pitying ridicule of a travelling tinker. We do well to catch and retain these pictures now, for the like will never again be painted. Steam and telegraph are obliterating the *piquant* eccentricities which have made our American rural and village life so picturesque. The tendency now is toward a normal type in manners, dress, habits, and character. We are thankful for every record of the times when men nursed their idiosyncrasies, and were only the more cherished and honored for them. Among the many services which Dr. Sprague has rendered to the public by his "Annals," we deem this by no means the least.

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6. — *The Study of Languages brought back to its true Principles, or the Art of Thinking in a foreign Language.* By C. MARCEL, Knt. Leg. Hon., author of "Language as a Means of Mental Culture," "Premiers Principes d'Éducation," etc. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1869. 12mo. pp. 228.

THE title "Marcel on Language" has been made familiar to the American public by the recent discussions upon methods of classical

instruction. The work just published by the Messrs. Appleton is, however, not Marcel's great general treatise on "Language," but a smaller, introductory work upon methods of linguistic study. It would be hard to find more suggestive thoughts and practical wisdom upon this subject compressed in the same space; and we trust that this antidote will go wherever the poison of pedantry and routine has penetrated.

M. Marcel, with all his radicalism, does not, however, make the mistake of some eager reformers, who propose that we should learn Latin and Greek "as we do our mother tongue," or even as we do living foreign languages. He is careful to insist, in his chapter on Mental Culture, on the distinction as well of method as of aim to be observed in the study of the two classes of languages. There are two methods, he says, — the *practical* and the *comparative*: "the first is best suited for modern languages, the second for the ancient" (p. 169). And again (p. 180): "The ends to be attained by studying these two categories of language differ essentially; the dead languages are learned for the sake of the national idiom, the living languages for their own sake." We wish that the author had discussed the comparative method as fully and elaborately as he has the practical; his remarks upon it are judicious, but too brief, consisting rather of hints and suggestions than a systematic plan of instruction.

One point that he makes requires a word of remark. It contains an element of truth; but it is put, we believe, in a shape which confounds truth and error, and is calculated to do harm rather than good. This is, that writing exercises in a foreign language is of no use to beginners; for "common sense requires that the learner should read before he writes, so as to know what is the best usage, in order to conform to it." (p. 206.) This is very just as regards attempts at elaborate composition; but it is forgotten that the special object which the best teachers have in view, in requiring written exercises, is not to produce good Latin or Greek, but to give the pupil the best possible practice on the principles which he is from time to time learning. A boy does not really know a form or understand a rule, until he has himself used it constructively.

It is in the earlier part of the book — on the practical method applicable to the acquisition of modern languages — that our author's views possess most novelty and value. The titles of the chapters themselves give an outline of his system: *The art of reading, the art of hearing, the art of speaking, the art of writing*. Whoever does not see the reason for this order (or at least a reason) must turn to Mr. Marcel's own arguments; it would be impossible to state them adequately in a few lines. Nor would it be easy to select for quotation from the striking

passages we have marked, if it were not that our own observation of the absurdities of "conversation classes" makes his remarks on this head peculiarly interesting to us. "What conversation can there be between a master and his pupils? The very little that the latter could say would never afford sufficient practice to gain an extensive range of colloquial language. They meet, the one to communicate, the others to receive instruction: the former ought to speak, the latter to listen." (p. 137.)

We do not suppose, nor probably would the author claim, that the exact method he develops, unmodified, would always be the best. Many features of it indeed might not work well in practice. In especial, we hesitate to accept his plan for beginners, — translating an easy author by the aid of a literal version on the opposite page, and with no attention paid to pronunciation; that is, not reading the words aloud at all, only translating. Pronunciation he proposes to bring in later in the course, leaving it wholly aside at this stage. But we are inclined to think that the pupil, instead of acquiring no pronunciation, would be all the time acquiring a very vicious one.

We would call especial attention to the chapter entitled "The Art of Hearing." No one that has experienced the bewilderment and helplessness which even a good French or German scholar experiences in listening for the first time to foreign conversation or discourse, will think that our author exaggerates the importance of practice in the art of hearing, as a school exercise. It is true, moreover, as he says, that "if the art of reading can be acquired without a teacher, it is otherwise with hearing and pronouncing."

7. — *Eleventh Annual Report of the Columbian Institution for the Deaf and Dumb, for the Year ending June 30, 1868, with an Appendix.*
Washington: Government Printing Office, 1868.

IN noticing the Tenth Report of this establishment for instructing deaf-mutes at the national capital, we spoke of the visit made by the president, Mr. E. M. Gallaudet to the European schools, and the effect his observations thereon were likely to produce in the American schools for deaf-mutes. We have now, in the Appendix to this Eleventh Report, the full proceedings of the Washington conference of principals of deaf-mute institutions, held in May, 1868, which largely occupied itself with the question of articulation and lip-reading as a means of teaching the deaf. Forty-five pages of the hundred and thirty-four devoted to the conference are filled with Mr. Gallaudet's